



Ad Val Advisor

*The Newsletter
for Wyoming
Property Tax
Appraisers*

Inside: ♦ Note from the Administrator ♦ Deployment: Lessons Learned ♦ IAAO News
♦ Tax District Reviews ♦ Residential Mapping Update ♦ Assessment Notices ♦ And more..

Property Tax Division Newsletter

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From the Administrator

A friend of mine once said, "It's a whole lot more fun to do the work than to do the paperwork." Up to a point, I have to agree. Of course, we can now create "virtual" paperwork: E-mails, electronic documents and the like, what another friend of mine calls "specially organized electrons." So, creating bales of paperwork, or its electronic equivalent, can be done more prolifically than ever these days. Similarly, distributing that information can be done more quickly than ever now through the use of technology—e-mail, websites, etc. There is a good possibility that this newsletter was delivered to you by one of those means.

What is a great challenge for us at the Property Tax Division is trying to keep all of that information

flowing and current. A very important example is the Department's Rules. Earlier this spring, I undertook a review of the Department's Rules relating to what is now the Property Tax Division. In virtually every chapter, I found items in need of revision. Underlying statutes have changed, methodologies evolved, technologies redesigned. So, the Property Tax Division staff and I began the task of rules revision. We've tackled the "straightforward" chapter revisions necessitated by statutory change first. Some of those chapters are in the promulgation process now. (Please see the DOR website, <http://revenue.state.wy.us>, for information). The more involved rule changes will be forthcoming in the months to come. There will certainly be an opportunity for comment in the process. The rules truly are living documents. My intent is to endeavor to keep them as current as possible.

As to the information dissemination side of things, we find that more and more of our "stakeholders" access information via the Department's website. (By the way, I'm not particularly fond of the term "stakeholder", but it sounds better, and shorter, than "that bunch of people who give a darn about what we do.") Keeping all of that information current is also a challenge for us, but we will continue to pursue making as much information as possible available on the website and keeping that information as current as practical. Comments and suggestions on how to improve our communications are always welcome. And, of course, if you're in Cheyenne,

stop by and say "hello." The coffee pot is usually on.

Wade W. Hall
Administrator
Property Tax Division

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Lessons Learned

After deploying Uinta and Sweetwater and starting the deployment process with Lincoln and Sublette, many different important issues have bubbled to the surface. This list is constantly growing and the following represents a sample of the more noteworthy items.

1. Silver Bullet Challenged.

The number one misconception that many people have regarding data cleanup is related to that ole' Silver Bullet. What is that one magical answer that will solve all questions that follow? This thinking stems from the idea that "if I only do this one thing, then everything else will be alright." Bottom line: the data cleanup silver bullet is as surreal as the gold of El Dorado and the ship of the Flying Dutchman.

Each county has its own set of data complexities. Oftentimes, these complexities come from a wide range of sources, including the way individuals enter information into the system. It is important to recognize this dynamic within your own data. The fix that worked miracles in, for example Uinta County, may not apply equally everywhere else. Remember, the conversion documents attempt to

condense the most common data practices down to a uniform, statewide standard. These data conversion standards remain your best information for cleanup and conversion.

2. No Horse Jumping.

We all need to remember the old cliché “Don’t change horses in the middle of the stream.” Our collection of conversion documents are kind of like that horse. Through our (DOR, CCI and the Standards Committees) collective wisdom, a set of standards were developed for the conversion. At some level, we all compromised to create a set of instructions for the vendor and all of us to follow. As we arrive at individual counties, we have heard comments about modifying the conversion this way or that way, all depending on the circumstances within the individual county’s data.

It is important for all of us to remember that we are moving toward a single conversion target.

Our challenge in this process is to prepare our own data for that conversion standard. In many cases, this can be accomplished through programming support services at the DOR or post-conversion with the assistance of CCI.

Regardless of the techniques we use to prepare our data or whatever clean-up routines we use post conversion, the data conversion standards must remain our benchmark throughout the process.

3. Stay in the Starting Block.

Across Wyoming, people are becoming very anxious to move to the new CAMA system. In preparation, some jurisdictions are trying to work toward the CCI RealWare product and “leap-frog” past the data conversion standard itself.

The salient point here is not to overshoot the desired goal for data conversion. The conversion is intended to take your data in its natural, mainframe state and convert it

successfully into RealWare. Don’t attempt to circumvent the conversion process in the hopes of getting ahead of the proverbial “starting pistol.” If there is a starting block in this data conversion process, it is the data conversion standards. The secret to best prepare for the move is to work toward those standards.

4. Evolution vs. Revolution.

A common misconception appears to be that when conversion to RealWare occurs, the bulk of the work is completed on the “go-live” date. This is simply not a true assumption.

While the conversion takes care of a great many things, it doesn’t solve the data issues that will inevitably remain after conversion. We are basically taking a square peg from the mainframe system and forcing it into the round space provided by RealWare. There are things we will collectively have to do to smooth the edges to provide for a better fit.

So far in the conversion, we know that the county will have to follow up and edit mill levy information, neighborhood data, basin areas in oil and gas, land economic areas (LEAs), identifying sketch areas, market adjustments and various pieces of land/improvement attribute and value information.

Overall, expect to spend time over the next few years smoothing all of the edges. The process of implementing RealWare with all its benefits will ultimately be more of an Evolution than a Revolution; more of a beginning than an end.

5. Values Will Age Like Fine Wine.

Comments have been circulating that Assessors may wait three or four years before using the values generated by RealWare. This is probably a bad idea considering that the shelf life of market values are very short and seem to spoil quickly!

All kidding aside, mainframe values are being locked down when they are converted into RealWare and will ultimately show up as an override value. These override values can be used initially, but the county will need to move as quickly as possible toward using the values generated by RealWare.

How do we accomplish this? With the data cleanup requirements that will enviably surface, it is a daunting process to clean up and verify data problems and to generate values from a new system. The override values will definitely fill the void in the short term. In the long term, however, each jurisdiction will need to systematically work through each property type correcting anything that will adversely affect the value. Testing the results of this new calculation with the original override value will give an excellent measurement of the amount of change that is occurring.

Without a doubt, CCI will be able to provide a wide range of ideas and suggestions to make this process go smoother. Reciprocally, it makes little sense to shut off all of the override values on all property the first year. This is especially true if preparations have not been made to value the property correctly through RealWare.

At a very basic level, each county will need to develop new market models, LEAs, cost adjustments, etc., for the new system. Depending on the timing of your deployment, it may simply be physically impossible to do all of this the first year.

The best bet is to wait and see what clean-up issues your conversion creates. These issues will have to be prioritized to determine the impact on setting values through RealWare. The Assessor will have to find those properties that have the potential of being valued in RealWare sooner than later. For example, the way agricultural land is valued through the mainframe is the same basic calculation that is used in RealWare.

In this case, it may require that the county verifies the conversion results at a global level, rather than collecting different information or producing new valuation models.

6. "Onezees, Twozees"

Any data conversion process normally follows an 80/20 guideline, or if you are really good a 90/10 guideline. Basically, these guidelines suggest (using the 90/10 guideline) that 90 percent of your data will convert successfully and will take at least 10 percent of your time and effort to accomplish. The flipside of this scenario is that 10 or 20 percent of your data will not convert exactly correctly and it will ultimately take 80 to 90 percent of your time to fix. Hopefully, our collective data conversion efforts will improve that ratio so that more data will convert and the process will require less time to fix the remaining errors.

When all of these processes have been considered, we still need to be cognitive of the "Onezees, Twozees" scenario. In every conversion, there comes a point, despite everyone's best efforts, that a few erroneous straggler records end up in the database. In these situations, be prepared to hand correct these types of problems. In many cases, it is simpler to hand correct the problem than building a complex set of conversion rules to handle very few stray records.

Remember that there are very effective techniques for correcting data post-conversion. With CCI's guidance, each county will have a wide assortment of tools and techniques to correct and update their data as problems are discovered. You can count on the fact that you and your staff will continue to unearth little data inconsistencies for sometime to come. This is the nature of data conversion and the true need of data management.

David Chapman
CAMA/GIS Manager
Property Tax Division

IAAO News

Technical Standards Committee

The Technical Standards Committee completed final draft work on two standards this past April and May.

The first standard is the "Personal Property Standard". With the assistance from personal property assessment authorities and tax consultants, the subcommittee, chaired by Ken Uhrich and staffed by Gary McCabe, CAE, and Scott McAlpine, finalized new recommendations to the existing 1997 standard.

The second standard is the "Sales Ratio Standard". A subcommittee chaired by Alan Dornfest, AAS, and staffed by committee members Nancy Tomberlin and Bruce Woodzell, analyzed information from experts in the assessment/equalization community, academic leaders, statisticians and sale ratio consultants before recommending "very significant changes" to the standard.

Both standard revisions have been very in-depth and will have future impacts upon your work procedures.

Effective June 1, 2005, the Technical Standards Committee will post exposure drafts of each standard on the IAAO web site (www.IAAO.org) under a special section header open to all IAAO members and non-members. The Technical Standards Committee is requesting your review of the documents and is soliciting comments. A specific comment period will be noted on the web site to ensure timely submission of remarks. All comments should be addressed to: Chris Bennett, Director of Publications and Marketing at: Bennett@iaao.org. They should be by Standard Title, Section Number and Line Number for accuracy of reference. The



committee's goal is to present them to the IAAO Executive Board for formal adoption at their September meeting prior to the 2005 Annual Conference in Anchorage.

Finally, the IAAO Chicago office will be shutting down to make the move to Kansas City on June 16, 2005. If you have needs, please let them know prior to that time. The new office will reopen around July 1, 2005.

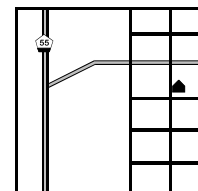
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (307) 777-5232 or KUHRIC@state.wy.us

Kenneth Uhrich
Appraisal Services Manager
Property Tax Division
IAAO State of Wyoming Representative

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Tax Districts

This reporter has been in the trenches with the troops battling the mounds of documentation received



over the last several months. A great number of documents were logged into the tax district database, scanned and are waiting for quality control review.

New recruits have been assigned for the QC process. The QC staff will review the quality of the scans and make sure the documents meet the standards set by DOR. Remember, DOR needs a boundary map, legal description and a forming document.

The next phase will be started shortly with a 3-person committee reviewing each entity for compliance. With the new recruits' help, this process should be faster than in the past. The brigade is hoping that each entity will be notified about their status in late summer. This will give them time to submit any

documentation missing before the November 1st deadline.

The brigade must track all taxing entities that have the ABILITY to levy. There are numerous entities charging a fee BUT actually have the ability to levy. These entities will create a tax district number and must be tracked.

As a reminder, DOR is in the process of promulgating rules covering what is an acceptable map, legal description and forming document. If in doubt, go to DOR's website for more information.

Robert Eicher
GIS Analyst
Property Tax Division

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Residential Property Update

Through working with the two beta counties, it was discovered that a calculation in the residential square footage had to be changed. The CLT system currently uses 75% when calculating the square footage for multi-story residences. The WYS system currently uses 65% when calculating the square footage of multi-story residences. The following calculations have been applied to the two mainframe systems:

CLT – Story Height, Field 505: if the structure is a multi-story residence, the square footage will be calculated as followed:

- 1Sty – Field 568 x **1.00** = New Base Square Footage X Addition Codes = Total Square Footage
- 1 ½ Sty – Field 568 X **1.75** = New Base Square Footage X Addition Codes = Total Square Footage
- 2 Sty – Field 568 X **2.00** = New Base Square Footage X Addition Codes = Total Square Footage

- 2 ½ Sty – Field 568 X **2.75** = New Base Square Footage X Addition Codes = Total Square Footage
- 3 Sty – Field 568 X **3.00** = New Base Square Footage X Addition Codes = Total Square Footage

The addition codes that are added to the total square footage are 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 26 and 27. The CLT counties don't have the ability to view this new total square footage. The square footage is automatically put into your CAMA download that goes to CCI for conversion.

WYS – Story Height, Field BR10: if the structure is a multi story residence than the square footage will be calculated as followed:

- 1 Sty – Field BR14 (A) X **1.00** = New Base Square Footage X BR38 = Total Square Footage
- 1 ½ Sty – Fields BR14 (B) X **1.65** = New Base Square Footage X BR38 = Total Square Footage
- 2 Sty – Field BR14 (C) X **2.00** = New Base Square Footage X BR38 = Total Square Footage
- 2 ½ Sty – Field BR14 (D) X **2.65** = New Base Square Footage X BR38 = Total Square Footage
- 3 Sty – Field BR14 (E) X **3.00** = New Base Square Footage X BR38 = Total Square Footage

The WYS counties have the new square footage on screen 2 of BKRS. To update the square footage, go to screen 10 of BKRS, hit PF2 twice, then go back to screen 2.

This new calculated square footage from both systems will be the square footage that will be converted into the RealWare system. If you have any questions about this calculation, please feel free to contact me and we can go over the calculation procedure.

Jack Rehm
Principal Appraiser
Property Tax Division

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Notices of Value (NOVs) aka “Assessment Notices”

A question came through from Eileen Oakley in Fremont County regarding the NOV from the RealWare system that may have a broad base of interest. The following is a recap of the question with the Department's response:

Question: What is the plan for mailing the NOVs? As I understand it, we will all be using similar formats. According to the purchase plan for the hardware, the printers would not be equipped with a duplexer and we currently duplex the schedules. At some level the post office has problems with our final mailing product. What is the plan to produce a mailable product?

Answer: The NOVs will initially be standardized for all counties. This will be a uniform format that CCI will support into the future. The counties will have the opportunity to create, or more applicably reformat, the NOVs for their individual jurisdictions' printing needs. The only requirement of the Department will be that we get a chance to review the NOV before it is deployed and that it contains all of the information that is required by rule and statute. Please note, DOR and CCI are still working toward completing the exact format of the future standardized “out of the box” NOV.

How a county intends to print the NOV will still be up to its discretion. DOR only requires that the NOV be generated from the RealWare product. We are hoping that the County Assessor will be able to use all of the functionality of the RealWare program including the actual printing of the NOV. However, the county may choose to use a third party printing service or use specialized

equipment for the mailing. This would be accomplished using an NOV export file from RealWare.

The standard NOV from RealWare is a single sided, single sheet, 8 1/2 x 11 piece of printer paper that will require an envelope for mailing. Again, some counties will undoubtedly prefer to reformat the NOV to fit on a sealable mailer with possibly a different paper size. Again, a good portion of the actual formatting and the physical printing of the NOV will come down to a matter of personal choice. At any length, RealWare will produce a standardized NOV that has been approved by the DOR and that will pass muster with the postal service once it is placed in a mailing envelope.

David Chapman
CAMA/GIS Manager
Property Tax Division

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New Abstract Codes for RealWare

We recently discovered the need for a couple of new Abstract Codes and added them to the appropriate RealWare table. The new codes are **39903** = Personal Property - Industrial - Natural Gas, and **39904** = Personal Property - Industrial - Coal Bed Methane. The conversion will not be able to identify the accounts that would use these codes as the data is not identified in the legacy systems.

After the conversion is complete the Assessor will be able to electronically move the desired accounts to the correct new abstract code. Either CCI or DOR will assist the Assessor in this process.

Joyln Stotts
Principal Appraiser
Property Tax Division

CAMA Project IT Walkthrough

As you know, the initial step in the CAMA implementation process is the IT walkthrough of the Assessor's Office and courthouse IT facilities. Representatives from both CCI and the Property Tax Division will be present on all IT reviews to ensure that all installation issues are covered, and that all questions regarding the process are answered.

The format of the visit consists of an initial meeting (a meeting room is preferred so other courthouse business is not interrupted) with the Assessor and his/her designated staff, and the local IT Manager. In this meeting, CCI will inquire about the current network configuration and talk about how their product is deployed. The representative from DOR will provide an overview of the whole implementation process, and answer questions that relate to issues that fall outside the scope of CCI's duties under this review.



Once the initial discussions are complete, a tour of the involved facilities (i.e. Assessor office, IT room, etc) is required for CCI to plan the installation, and to identify any obstacles that could cause difficulties during the actual system set-up. In addition, DOR will gather IP addresses for the workstations in the county office that will be utilized to review the RealWare product. These IPs will be recognized by the DOR test server when county users sign in to "play" with the product.

Based on the observations made during the review, CCI will write an "As Is" report that they will use to identify how to integrate the new hardware and software into the existing network environment. This analysis leads to the "To Be" report,

which in turn reflects the new CAMA deployment plan.

The IT walkthroughs for Carbon and Fremont counties were recently completed. Next on the list are Weston, Crook, Campbell, and Sheridan counties. These visits are currently scheduled to take place during the week of June 20th barring any scheduling conflicts with county staff.

If you have any questions about the IT walkthroughs, please contact Geir Solvang (ph: 307-777-5432 - email: gsolva@state.wy.us), or call any of the Assessor Offices that have already experienced the first big step of this exciting process.

Geir Solvang
Principal Appraiser
Property Tax Division

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API Number for RealWare



The API Number issued by the Wyoming Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (WOGCC) for wells drilled in Wyoming is an important piece of information to be used in the Oil & Gas Module of RealWare. Clicking on the API Number in RealWare will link you to the Wyoming Oil & Gas Conservation Commission for that well.

Every county will need to have the API Number formatted correctly to be able to access the WOGCC site. The formatting should be consistent with the following: The two digit Federal ID Number followed by the 5 numbers of the API Number with no punctuation or leading 0s. **EX: 2321034**; The “23” is the Federal ID Number for Lincoln County and the next 5 numbers make up the API Number that the WOGCC assigns to each well.

List of Federal ID Number for each county

CountyID	CountyName	FedID
1	Natrona County	25
2	Laramie County	21
3	Sheridan County	33
4	Sweetwater County	37
5	Albany County	1
6	Carbon County	7
7	Goshen County	15
8	Platte County	31
9	Big Horn County	3
10	Fremont County	13
11	Park County	29
12	Lincoln County	23
13	Converse County	9
14	Niobrara County	27
15	Hot Springs County	17
16	Johnson County	19
17	Campbell County	5
18	Crook County	11
19	Uinta County	41
20	Washakie County	43
21	Weston County	45
22	Teton County	39
23	Sublette County	35

The link between RealWare and the WOGCC by API# **will not** work unless the number is formatted correctly. This function will certainly be an asset to all of the counties in managing well data.

Joyln Stotts
Principal Appraiser
Property Tax Division

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10/03/05 – 10/04/05

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Marshall & Swift Cost Approach –
Commercial,
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Jack Rehm at (307) 777-5313, or
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